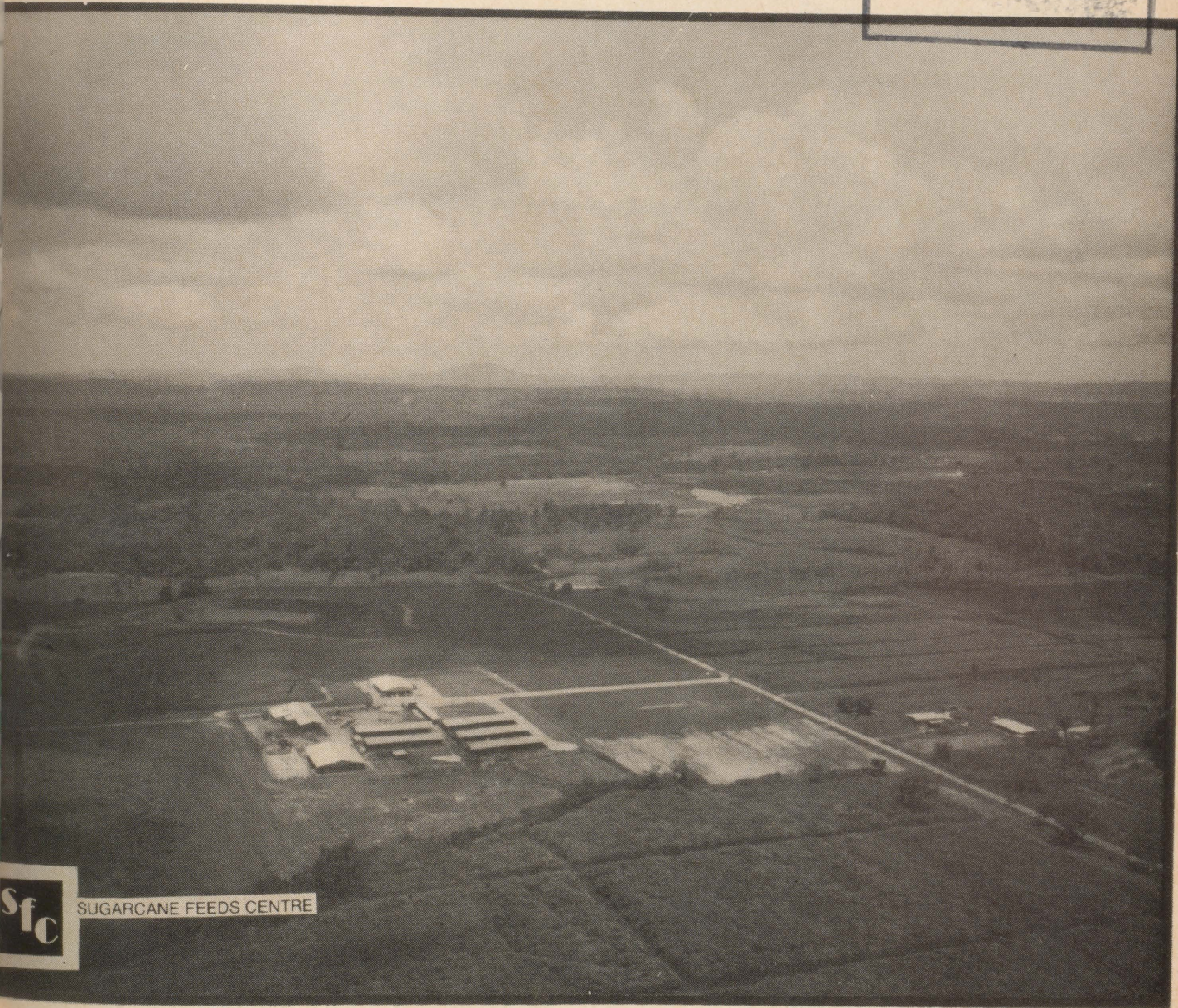


# The Macdonald Journal

APRIL 1982

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SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE







# The Macdonald Journal

APRIL 1982

Volume 43, No. 4  
April 1982

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## In This Issue

Cover: For a comprehensive review of the Sugarcane Feeds Centre project, located in Trinidad, may we suggest you turn to the Editorial on page 2 and the article on page 3.

Editorial: Sugarcane Feeds Centre: A Rewarding Challenge	2
Sugarcane Feeds Centre	3
Ear Tag Control of Livestock Pests	8
Safety — An Everyday Rule	10
Tractor and Machinery Safety: Think and Practice	10
Learning to Live with Poisonous Gases	12
Safety with Farm Chemicals	14
The Family Farm	15
This Month with the QWI	18

## Journal Jottings

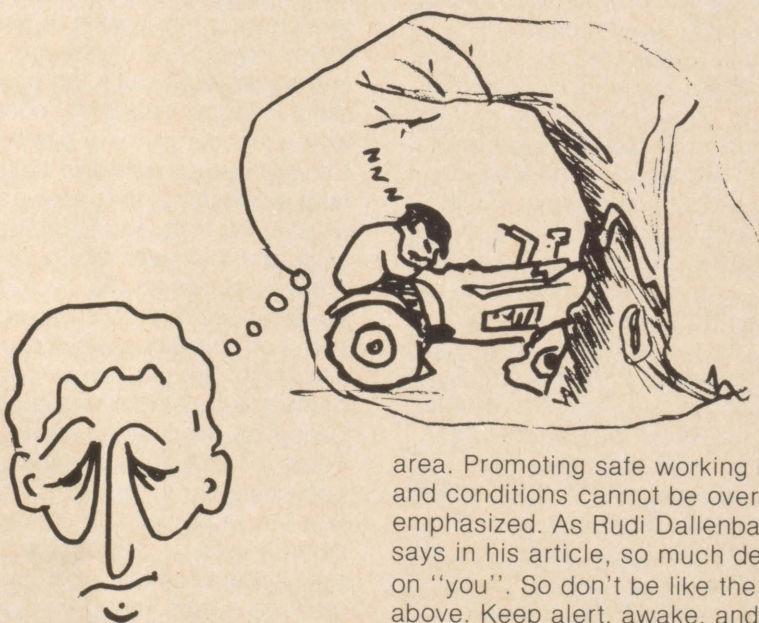
The lead article this month, as indicated by the cover, is international flavour. So is the Editorial, and we would like to thank Dr. Hirschfeld for his contribution. One of the research projects that I have been anxious to see appear in the Journal is in this issue. "Ear Tag Control of Livestock Pests" will, I am certain, be read with great interest by both beef and dairy men.

Don Currie of the Diploma Program has been conducting a much-needed and appreciated one-man farm safety campaign. He has attended meetings and seminars and travelled to various regions in Quebec to speak to farm groups. He is also co-ordinated the three safety articles in this issue. I read

recently that a farm safety campaign is underway in the Richmond

area. Promoting safe working habits and conditions cannot be over-emphasized. As Rudi Dallenbach says in his article, so much depends on "you". So don't be like the fellow above. Keep alert, awake, and... alive!

Hazel M. Clarke.





# Editorial

## **SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE: A Rewarding Challenge**

The appearance in this issue of Professor Eugene Donefer's article on the Sugarcane Feeds Centre in Trinidad offers the opportunity to reflect on the joys (and occasional tribulations) of this project.

McGill University has for years engaged in research and teaching activities in many parts of the world. The Caribbean area because of its closeness, because of the good relations we enjoy with our numerous alumni there, and not least because of its great beauty and charm, has seen a large share of such efforts. We are happy in particular to operate the Bellairs Institute in Barbados, for which we received facilities and a small endowment in the fifties.

But never, certainly within living memory, were we asked to engage in so substantial and important a managerial venture as the construction and initial operation of the Sugarcane Feeds Centre. From the beginning we knew, of course, that thanks to Gene Donefer we had the concept of how to raise beef and milk with sugarcane, and we were keen to give a commercial-scale demonstration thereof. We also had the expertise in soil management necessary to adapt poor land to raising crops. But carrying out major construction, purchasing large equipment, managing a sizable labour force, etc., at a distant site where we did not know the commercial and labour practices very well presented a major challenge which the University accepted only reluctantly and only because we saw no other good way of having this very promising venture go forward.

Naturally, there were some problems. Interesting technical, scientific, and economic problems are noted by Dr. Donefer. On the management side the most serious stemmed from several threatened interruptions in the cash flow, which were usually resolved only at the last minute before — or even after — stringent deadlines. But these problems — like the others — were always happily resolved, thanks to the intrinsic merits of the project, the good humour and helpful attitude of the Trinidad and Tobago authorities and of the University of the West Indies, and because of the forbearance and flexibility of our own administration.

Nevertheless, I would conclude that such large managerial ventures are not necessarily ideal for a university. I do not mean that we should not take risks, even big risks, in undertaking big tasks, but we should take risks on things that we can to some extent control. We should usually not be expected in our Research and Development work to gamble in major ways on our financial, political and managerial skills, and on our skills in labour relations, none of which are our primary business. The University was willing in this case to take its chances that preparatory work in St. Kitts and Barbados was valid and that our Faculty of Agriculture resources could be utilized. We should always be ready to take our chances on our experts and skills. We were able to overcome the problems in this case, and I suppose the final successful outcome justifies the risks that had been taken, and Dr. Donefer, the late Mr. Muirhead, Mr. Neckles, Mr. Conrad, and Dr. Broughton (to name only some of those most involved) deserve our profound thanks.

The Centre has not only demonstrated the feasibility of the production system but has also started to spread the word through visitors, workshops and articles to other parts of the Caribbean and elsewhere. Although the system developed at the Sugarcane Feeds Centre appears primarily suited for well organized, large-scale operations, which can be private, co-operative, or governmental, it involves a concept and techniques which are enormously promising for small-scale (peasant) farmers who will be around for a long time to come and will continue to make an important contribution to local food supplies. I think we may justly say that through this project a real contribution has been made to the perennial problem of how to add high quality foods to the diets of the often malnourished people of the tropics.

McGill University and notably our Macdonald Faculty of Agriculture are convinced of the worthiness of the above objectives. We are certain that we have a great opportunity, maybe an obligation, to work with Third World colleagues and friends at universities, laboratories, and on farms, to spread our knowledge and skills, as well as to increase and diversify them through such interaction for the benefit of everyone, including incidentally our students who are our primary responsibility.

### **W.F. Hitschfeld Director, McGill International**

Dr. Hitschfeld was Vice-Principal and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research during the investigation and much of the SFC project. As such, he played an important role on the McGill SFC Executive Committee.

In keeping with our policy of freedom of expression, the opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily of the Journal.



# SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE

by Professor E. Donefer  
Department of Animal Science

In the May, 1978, issue of the Macdonald Journal I wrote an article describing the official opening of the SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE (SFC) in Trinidad and the involvement of McGill University through the Macdonald Campus Faculty of Agriculture. Now four years later, with the McGill responsibilities for the project having ended, it is a good opportunity to review what was accomplished from the time of the investigation of the SFC to its present situation as an operating agricultural production unit.

The concept of the SFC was an outgrowth of small-scale projects conducted from 1968 to 1974 in the Caribbean in the islands of St. Kitts and Barbados, where the possibility was investigated of feeding sugarcane to cattle and sheep as their major ration component. Several Macdonald staff and students were involved in these projects, which demonstrated that sugarcane fed to livestock resulted in good liveweight gains and thus provided a use of the whole sugarcane plant as an alternative to sugar production.

In the St. Kitts and Barbados projects the sugarcane was processed using Canadian-developed technology, which involved splitting the sugarcane stalk and separating the woody outside rind from the sugar-rich fibrous internal portion (termed "Comfith" or sugarfith). The Comfith could be used for board manufacture and the sugarfith (grounded stalk used for conventional sugar factory extraction (to manufacture sugar) or fed directly to livestock as an energy-rich forage.

The Barbados Project (1969-74) was financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in cooperation with the Government

of Barbados. Due to the favourable preliminary results, CIDA became interested in extending the results to determine the practical applicability of the sugarcane feeding concept.

In 1974 CIDA requested McGill to prepare a report on a proposed Centre to be established in Trinidad in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI) Faculty of Agriculture, in which the technical and economic feasibility of using sugarcane-derived livestock feeds would be demonstrated. The report submitted to CIDA in mid 1975 recommended the establishment of the SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE with a primary demonstration and training function. Sugarcane-derived feeds (canefeeds) can result as by-products of the sugar factory manufacturing process (i.e., molasses, bagasse) or can involve the direct use of the whole sugarcane plant. It was accepted that the major SFC emphasis should be on the whole plant utilization and that the simpler and less expensive processing method of chopping should be investigated in addition to the specific Canadian derinding technology used in previous projects.

In October, 1976, a contract was signed between CIDA and McGill University where McGill agreed to be the executing agency for the SFC establishment and operation for a five-year period. I was designated as Project Director and was largely replaced in my normal Macdonald research and teaching activities for the project duration. Because of the multi-disciplinary nature of the SFC, valuable contributions to its development have been made by many staff members from the Faculties of Agriculture of both McGill and UWI. A SFC office, established on the Macdonald Campus, was responsi-

ble for different project activities including ordering equipment and supplies and keeping accounts for reporting to CIDA on the funds spent in Canada and Trinidad. The total CIDA contribution was \$5 million with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago contributing an additional \$1 million.

The first Project Manager in Trinidad was George Muirhead, a Canadian with more than 20 years of experience in British Columbia in livestock extension who had also completed five years of overseas experience in Zambia and Mauritius prior to joining our staff. When George arrived in Trinidad in late 1976, the initial job was to transform the 150-acre (60 hectare) project site made available by the Trinidad Government to an operational centre. Our pre-project report submitted in 1975 did not anticipate the nature of the problem in terms of site preparation since we had assumed land of at least average productivity would be available. As an important part of the SFC concept was the growing, harvesting, and processing of sugarcane to support the intended livestock population, the first challenge was to prepare the site for planting. An initial survey conducted by Drs. Ahmad and Gumbs (UWI) confirmed the poor structure, drainage, and fertility characteristics of the soil, which were of high acidity and high aluminum content. The project site in early 1977 thus represented an area previously abandoned for agriculture purposes, with half of the area in forest growth. The question was whether project resources (financial and technical) should be diverted to land reclamation or if only the livestock aspects should be developed with sugarcane requirements met from outside purchases. As the poor soil type was



representative of much of the underutilized land in Trinidad and other tropical areas, the decision was made to go ahead and develop the project site for sugarcane production. An initial planning input was made by Dr. Warkentin of the Macdonald Renewable Resources Department (Soils) and the strategy for the major part of the SFC soil improvement program was provided by Dr. Broughton of the Macdonald Agricultural Engineering Department. Land was cleared and installations included a sub-surface drainage system and buried PVC pipe to be used with a travelling sprinkler for subsequent application of liquid manure resulting from the cattle operation. Initial heavy applications of lime and inorganic fertilizer were later supplemented with cattle manure as the major fertilizer source.

The overall success of the soil renovation program has been reflected in the average sugarcane yields obtained on the 94 acres (38 ha) of project land planted to sugarcane. In 1980 32 tonnes/acres (80 tonnes/ha) of fresh cane was produced, with a dry matter content of approximately 30 per cent, comparing favourably with cane yields on commercial lands in Trinidad. This illustrates the outstanding production characteristic of the sugarcane crop which yields annually about twice the dry matter of a North American-produced whole corn crop, with the cane having the other advantage of being a perennial with six to seven annual crops generally harvested before replanting.

Another aspect of the establishment of the SFC involved the design and construction of the buildings for animal housing, feed storage and processing, equipment maintenance and offices. The initial building planning contribution was by Dr. Ogilvie of the Macdonald Agricultural Engineering Department with the supervision of Dev Duggal, a former Macdonald graduate student who was employed by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Agriculture. In both land development and building

construction aspects, Project Manager George Muirhead, under the difficult existing conditions, made it possible for SFC operational aspects to start in the second year of the project. In 1979, Floyd Neckles became Project Manager with George continuing in an advisory capacity. George Muirhead's death in 1980, after his return to Canada, was commemorated by a plaque placed in the SFC office building which recognized his outstanding contribution to the establishment and operation of the Centre.

At the time of its official opening and first Sugarcane Feeds Workshop, held in February, 1978, the Centre had become operational although land, crop, and construction activities were still incomplete.

The SFC livestock production system commenced in mid 1977 with the initiation of calf purchases from local farmers. The Trinidad cattle population is kept primarily for dairy production, with substantial imports of Holstein cattle from Canada and the United States made over the last several decades. The imported cattle have been crossbred to a limited extent to tropical-type (Zebu) cattle with the resultant population about 75 per cent Holstein and 25 per cent Zebu type. In Trinidad as in many areas specializing in milk production (including Quebec) male calves which offer a good potential source of veal or beef are generally *not well utilized*. The SFC livestock production system was thus based on the purchase of calves, averaging about a week of age, rearing them in individual cages on milk replacer for a five-week period, and after 10 weeks transferring them to pens where they were group fed sugarcane-based rations until market weights were reached.

Over a 4.5-year period, about 1,100 calves have been purchased and reared at SFC. A substantial amount of data has been collected on growth and feed intake characteristics as influenced by different types and levels of milk

replacers, length of milk feeding periods, and different types of forage and grain mixtures. Overall calf mortality has averaged about 10 per cent, which is considerably lower than observed on Trinidad small-scale dairy farms. Over a 72-day period from purchase to transfer to group feeding, daily weight gains for a recent group of 135 calves have averaged 0.4 kg (0.8 lb) with final weights averaging 60 kg (132 lb).

The SFC system involves group feeding of cattle until reaching weights of 400 kg (900 lbs) when they are sold for beef in the case of steers, or in the case of heifers they are bred and sold to farmers as dairy herd replacements. The primary ration ingredient has been fresh chopped mature sugarcane which is harvested on a daily basis. As the sugarcane plant is characterized by low protein, mineral, and vitamin contents, adequate nutrients must be supplemented in order to meet animal requirements.

Over the past several years, different feeding programs have been evaluated in order to determine the effect of various factors on cattle liveweight gains and economic performance. At any particular time, three to four different feeding programs will be conducted using the 500-600 cattle population. Factors evaluated include level of sugarcane in the ration (varying from 77 down to 20 per cent on a dry basis), the effect of different types and levels of protein supplementation, and the feeding value of ensiled (fermented) sugarcane used as a form of preservation. Cattle gains have been observed to be primarily a function of level of sugarcane in the ration with cattle gaining about 0.7 kg (1.5 lb) at a 70-75 per cent ration level and 0.8 to 1.3 kg (1.8 to 3.0 lb) daily when cane ranged from 40 to 20 per cent of the ration. This inverse relationship is one that is commonly found in beef cattle production in North America where ration forage level is negatively related to liveweight gains. Although higher gains are achieved with lower



average (cane) levels, the problem is that the non-forage ration component usually consists of grains like corn which are high priced or of limited availability for livestock feed in Trinidad and other developing countries.

At SFC, molasses has been used to replace a considerable portion of the ration grain content and current studies are utilizing broken rice as a by-product of the rice industry, as a grain source. Economic studies indicate that high sugarcane usage is more economical than using high grain levels, even with reduced weight gains because of the much lower cost of producing sugarcane locally. The use of higher forage-low grain rations also results in a lean type of beef much more suited to local market conditions. Over a two-year period, 464 steers were sold by



SFC calf-rearing unit



Doyd Neckles, SFC Project Manager, demonstrating sugarcane processing equipment to a group of agriculture students from the University of the West Indies (UWI).



SFC for beef representing a total market beef weight of 87,900 kg (193,750 lb). This beef has been marketed in supermarkets and smaller stores and has made a major impact on the Trinidad market since over 90 per cent of the local beef requirement is usually imported (from New Zealand, the U.S., and Canada).

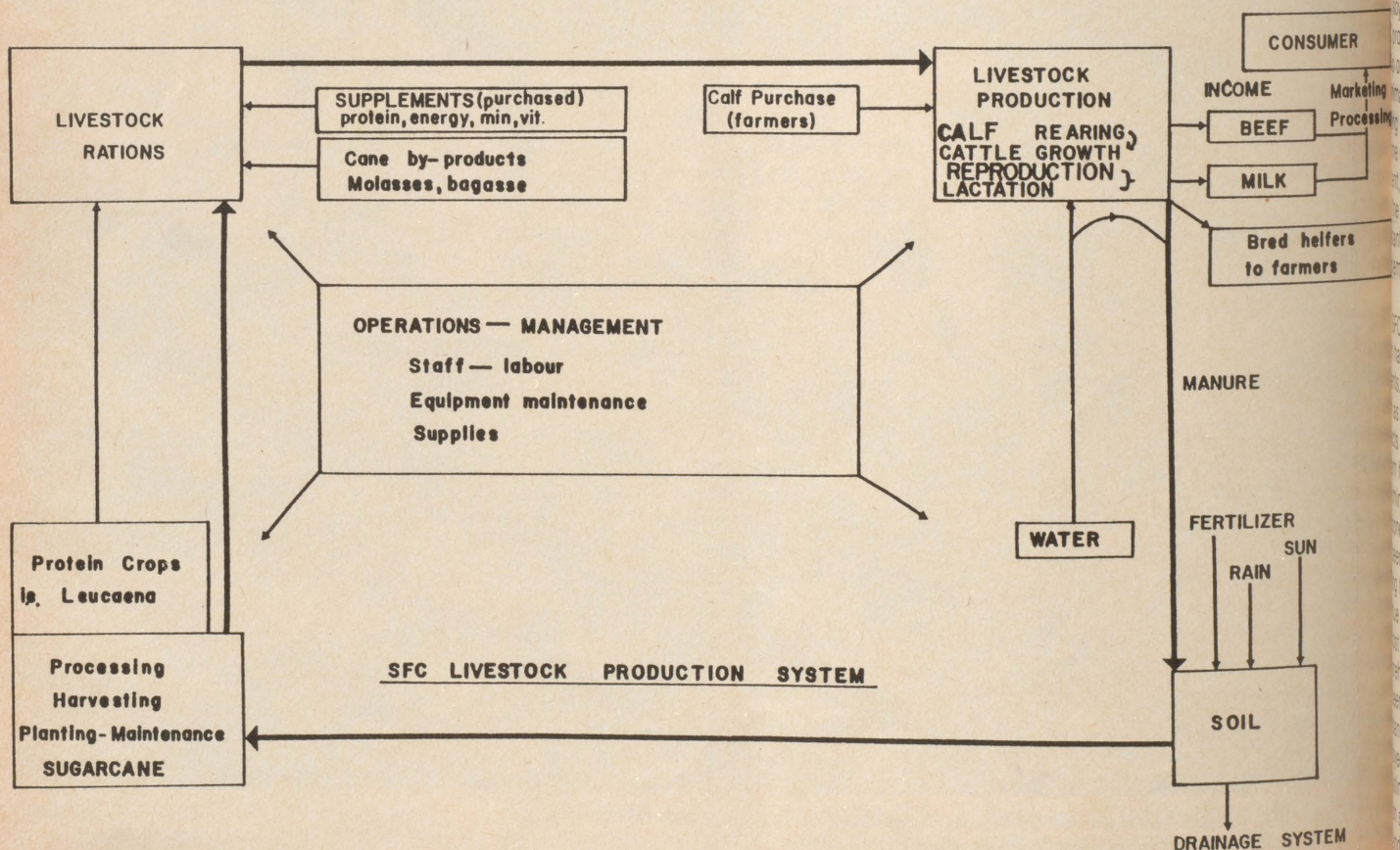
An early addition to the cattle growing program was the purchase of female calves to be raised on the SFC system. Of the 170 calves purchased up until September, 1981, 66 have reached a reproductive stage, with 30 confirmed pregnant animals being sold to local dairy farmers. The advantage of the SFC feeding system is to reduce the age of calving, with a goal of heifers to calve at 27 months, which is a year or more less than normally achieved in Trinidad. If such results could be extended to the local dairy industry, the substantial increase in reproductive efficiency would result in higher levels of domestic milk production. A small herd of up to 20 milking cows has been maintained at the

SFC with some cows currently into their third lactation. The cows are fed chopped sugarcane at a 60 per cent level supplemented with a concentrate mixture to supply required nutrients and have averaged about 9 kg (20 lb) of milk daily over the lactation period. Although this production level is low by North American standards, it is quite favourable compared to that generally achieved in the tropics. Due to a high price recently set for milk by the government, dairy systems using sugarcane have a good economic potential. Dr. Block of the Macdonald Department of Animal Science has been involved in setting up feeding trials to determine the full potential of the cows to produce milk under Trinidad conditions.

In Figure 1 the overall SFC livestock production system illustrates the necessary multidisciplinary nature of the operation. Although research trials have been superimposed upon different parts of the system in order to determine the effect of various factors or inputs on production levels, the Centre has basically

operated to develop and demonstrate a commercial agricultural prototype. As crops must be harvested and cattle fed on a daily basis throughout the year, operational considerations always have first priority.

Several operational and technical problems have been identified and attempts made to correct them. A major limiting factor is difficulty of harvesting sugarcane during the rainy season, which in Trinidad occurs about three quarters of the year (May to December). In addition to field management problems on the water-logged soils, the feeding quality of the cane also decreases in the rainy season due to reduced sugar levels. An SFC program underway to correct this difficulty involves the use of sugarcane harvested in the dry season at peak feeding value but preserved for wet season feeding by ensiling. Dr. Baker of the Macdonald Department of Agricultural Chemistry has been investigating the use of silage additives to further preserve cane feeding value.







VI students learning about cattle growth program

another limiting factor is related to the low protein content of cane and the need of supplementation with expensive sources of imported protein (soybean meal). A preliminary SFC program, established by Dr. Phillip of the Macdonald Department of Animal Science, has involved feeding studies with a locally grown gume (leucaena) of high protein content, with initial results indicating that the plant can contribute a substantial portion of the needed supplemental protein.

The SFC economic analysis program has consisted of several components. Resource requirements such as labour and equipment for all aspects of the crop and animal system have been measured to determine the costs of each system component. Gross margin analysis has been conducted for the various feeding trials to determine the revenue obtained (meat, milk) minus the cost of feed inputs. The most comprehensive economic analysis has been conducted by Bob Conrad, Assistant Project Director, who has employed the technique of formulating a commercial beef production system using SFC-generated data and calculating internal rates of

return covering a 20-year operating period. The economic results indicate that feedlot beef production in Trinidad using sugarcane-based rations is commercially viable at scales of operation of over 500 head of cattle, this due to the costs of the relatively capital intensive structures and equipment required. These results are qualified in that they are based on price relationships existing at a specific time and are based on technical assumptions based on results from SFC feeding trials during the last year of the project. As further technical developments should serve to increase the level and reduce costs of production, improved commercial viability should provide stimulation to increase local production.

The SFC has operated a small extension program with a selected group of small-scale dairy farmers to determine actual farmers' interest in using sugarcane as a feed. The results have indicated that since these farms are operated to an increasing extent on a part time basis with low levels of management and production, the potential for innovation is limited. An informal extension program has operated

through visits of individuals and groups to the Centre. Over the last two-year period, over 1,300 visitors were recorded representing people identified as 60 per cent local, 30 per cent regional (Caribbean), and 10 per cent international. The local visitors have been farmers' groups organized through the Government Extension Service, University students (UWI), and high school students taking vocational agriculture courses.

As a result of these visits, there has been an indication that many farmers are interested in introducing innovations on their farms. This interest is based on observing different SFC management practices, some of which involve sugarcane feeding. The actual demonstration and training impact of the SFC on local and regional livestock production will take some time to develop. The three Sugarcane Feed Workshops held at SFC involved over 100 participants each time, with the majority of the 12 Commonwealth Caribbean countries represented.

Although executed by a foreign-based University (McGill) and as a result of a deliberate policy, all managerial, technical, and operational SFC staff in Trinidad are, and have been, Trinidad residents (with the exception of George Muirhead, and an agricultural engineer employed during the final project year).

As of October, 1981, all physical and capital assets of the Centre became the property of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, who will continue the SFC operation, including all necessary funding, for an additional three-year period. It is of interest that during this next SFC phase, operations will be continued according to the previous overall objectives, utilizing the existing organizational and managerial procedures and local staff. Some measure of the McGill success as executing agent in the initial five-year period will be the growth and continuing contributions of the SUGARCANE FEEDS CENTRE under its local direction and management.





# Ear Tag Control of Livestock Pests

by Professor David J. Lewis,  
Department of Entomology and  
Professor Elliot Block,  
Department of Animal Science

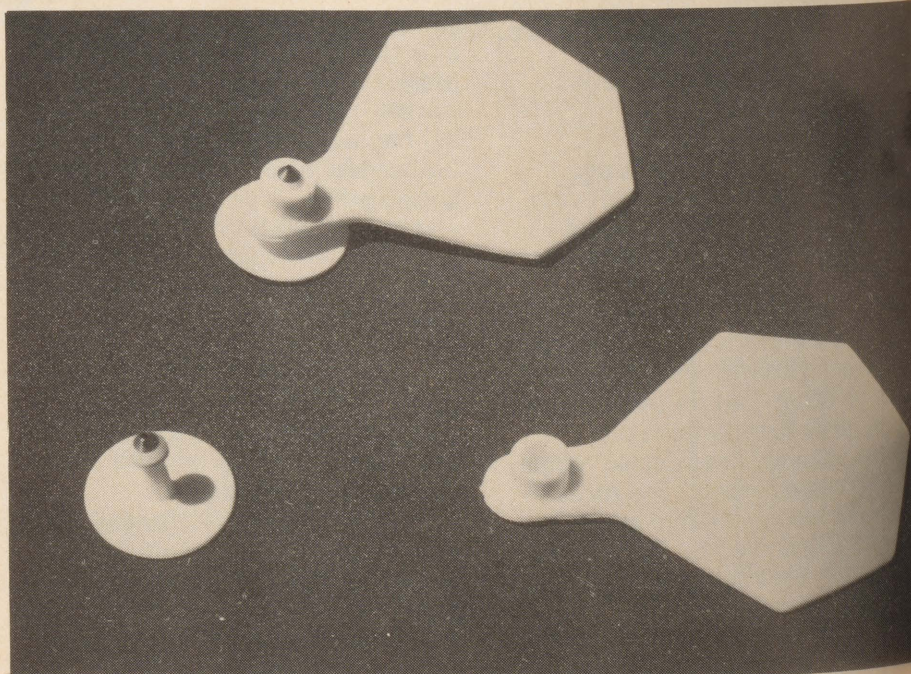
In the past few years insecticide-impregnated cattle ear tags have been extremely effective in controlling several pests of livestock. These include horn flies, face flies, several species of ticks, and, to a lesser extent, house flies, and stable flies. Insecticidal cattle ear tags have also protected test animals from infestation by the screwworm. These tags may be used on both beef and dairy cattle.

The insecticidal cattle ear tag is a plastic ear tag impregnated with an insecticide and structurally resembles typical cattle identification tags. Most tags are impregnated with permethrin, fenvalerate or tetrachlorvinphos, but decamethrin, dichlorvos, and stirofos have also been used. The tag is easily attached to the ear by using cattle tagging pliers, and it is usually positioned slightly below the tip of the ear such that the tag hangs below the ear. Once the tag is in position and as the animal licks itself or comes into contact with another animal, the tag comes into contact with the hair thereby removing a thin layer of insecticide (approximately 2-3 mg/day). Each time a layer of insecticide is removed, a new active surface is exposed. This action continues for the life of the tag and does not appear to be affected by dampness or rain. The area of the body touched by the tag becomes lethal to pests which land or crawl onto that area.

In the summer of 1981 a tetrachlorvinphos-impregnated ear tag was evaluated on the Macdonald Farm. Two groups of cattle (mostly Holstein but also Ayrshire) were used in the evaluation. Cows of the tagged group each had one tag in the right ear; the control group, without tags, was on separate pasture. Weekly fly counts on both groups showed that there were four main pests: horn flies (75.6 per cent), stable flies (15.0 per cent), house flies (5.2 per cent), and face flies (3.1 per cent). The remaining 1.1 per cent consisted of mosquitoes, horse flies, and deer flies. During the summer there was an overall fly reduction of 88.5 per cent on the tagged animals. While there was a reduction in numbers of all the component species, the reductions

were not uniform. The most significant reduction (95.9 per cent) occurred in the horn flies; the face flies, house flies, and stable flies were reduced 84.3 per cent, 65.9 per cent and 60.3 per cent respectively. The tags provided excellent control for a 14-week period (early June-mid September). During the 15th week of the evaluation the number of flies on the tagged animals rose by 573.3 per cent over the previous week, indicating a loss of insecticidal activity.

Similar studies with different ear tags in other regions of Canada and the United States have shown that horn flies can also be successfully controlled when only one of every four animals is tagged. In some of those studies longer or better con-



Assembled and disassembled ear tags.





horn flies on the loin area of a cow.



Stable flies and house flies on legs.



olsteins with ear tags.

Control of flies was affected by increasing the number of tags (i.e., two tags on each animal — one in each ear). However, two tags on one third of the cows in a herd has been almost as effective as two tags on every cow. In Alberta the daily weight gain of pastured yearlings can be reduced as much as 30 per cent due to horn flies. Also, calves weaned from unprotected mothers were considerably lighter than those whose mothers had been protected from horn flies. Control of the face fly in some areas has been associated with a significant reduction of pinkeye. Although ear tags can be used for all animals in a herd (from yearlings to bulls), at least some manufacturers do not recommend tagging calves less than five or six months of age due to possible ear deformity. In all studies, including the one conducted on the MacDonald Farm, there has been very little evidence of necrosis or skin irritation of the ear area around the tag. Occasionally an animal loses its tag. In earlier studies this appeared to be a fault in the tag design; however, in more recent studies it seems to be a result of cows rubbing their heads against fence posts, trees, or each other.

Insecticide-impregnated ear tags do not provide total pest control, but they show considerable promise. At present, they offer excellent control of horn fly and a substantial reduction of the face fly on pastured cattle. The use of such tags (which are easily applied, replaced, and removed) may reduce the frequency of coralling for spray applications and may reduce weight losses and production losses.



# Learning to LIVE with Poisonous Gases

by Jim Currie  
Assistant Director, Farm Practice  
Diploma Program

## February 22, 1982

*Ste. Augustin, Quebec. Three young men killed while working above a manure pit of a dairy barn.*

**Expected cause:** Hydrogen sulphide gas — coroner's inquest in progress.

## September 14, 1977

*Gananoque, Ontario. Three men die when overcome by silo gas.*

Both of the above instances graphically illustrate two dangerous situations on many modern farms: the production of poisonous gases by stored material. Certainly many farms do not have liquid manure pits, but any manure storage area can build up toxic gases under certain conditions. Much more common is the tower silo, obvious on so many farms around the country. It is vital to know the why's of lethal gas development in order to avoid the danger of becoming the next tragic headline.

In general terms, a foreign gas of any kind tends to tie-up or exclude oxygen from normal air. Under certain circumstances and if it is in a strong enough concentration, any gas that reduces the available oxygen can become lethal.

There are many hazardous gases that occur on the farm but the worst two are hydrogen sulphide ( $H_2S$ ) commonly called "manure gas", and nitrogen dioxide ( $NO_2$ ) or "silo gas".

Liquid manure systems are becoming much more common as farmers try to economize on manpower by automation. The hog industry converted to liquid first, but now more dairy and beef farmers are considering this option when building new barns. As with any new techniques, there are definite benefits for those who learn how to use them properly. With these benefits come the in-

evitable risks such as the number and types of hazardous gases produced by the natural breakdown of manure in anaerobic conditions. Gases such as methane and carbon dioxide, both toxic in high enough concentrations, are produced. However, hydrogen sulphide,  $H_2S$ , has acquired the common name manure gas because it is by far the most dangerous of all the manure by-products. Hydrogen sulphide is a clear, colourless gas with a characteristic rotten egg odour at low concentrations. Reliance on this odour as a hazard warning can be deadly since the gas at concentrations over 150 ppm overpowers the sense of smell so the person can no longer detect its presence. Similarly, the loss of detectable odour while in the barn doesn't mean that there is no more danger; it could mean the exact opposite — that the gas concentration has increased and is approaching more lethal levels.

There are two main danger periods with manure gas. Since  $H_2S$  is heavier than air, it accumulates just above the surface in the tank. As the tank fills, the gas can be forced above the level of the floor, thus affecting livestock, short children and, ultimately, taller people. This would be especially true in barns with poor ventilation, but even under good conditions the weight of this gas makes it more difficult to move, leaving concentrations in pockets in the barn.

The greatest danger occurs during agitation since far more gas is released at this time. The reaction is similar to that of a soft drink when shaken. The increase in gas must go somewhere and if not enough space is available in the pit, it will be forced up into the barn.

When working with a liquid manure system the recommended precautions are as follows:

1. Under no circumstances should anyone enter a liquid manure pit — even if the pit is empty —

without wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus. Use a life line that is connected to someone outside the danger area.

2. Never allow the manure pit to fill completely. Allow one or two feet of air space to accommodate concentrations of gas.
3. If possible, lower the level of liquid manure in the storage facility before commencing agitation. This will further reduce the possibility of gas being forced above floor level.
4. Keep the agitator below the liquid surface. Gas will be released in greater volumes if vigorous surface agitation occurs.
5. Provide strong ventilation during pumping and agitation. The building interior should be off limits to people and, if possible, animals should be evacuated.
6. Because of the dangers presented by the agitation and pumping operations, these procedures should involve two people, connected by a life line, with one person always outside of the danger area.
7. Consult with your physician if you have been exposed to hydrogen sulphide in concentrations severe enough to cause irritation to the respiratory tract.

## Silo Gases

Silos are much more common in Quebec than are manure pits. They are accepted as a tremendous asset by most farmers, but, again, there are drawbacks. The worst of these is "silo gas".

Silo gas or nitrogen dioxide is formed when the nitric oxide released during fermentation combines with free oxygen in the silo. Nitric oxide is toxic but normally combines quickly enough that it is not a problem. Unfortunately the new product, nitrogen dioxide, is even more



ic. Its effect at higher concentra-  
ns has been compared to being  
by a bullet. When inhaled the gas  
acts with water in the respiratory  
ct to form nitric and nitrous acids.  
ese in turn react with natural  
ali salts in the tract to form  
nitrates and nitrites causing irritation  
d chemical pneumonia. Exposure  
heavy concentrations can result  
death within seconds. Lesser con-  
centrations may result in extensive  
g damage with the strong  
ssibility of death hours later due  
pneumonia. **FOR THIS REASON,  
YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN  
POSED, GET TO A DOCTOR  
QUICKLY.**

reduce the risk of silo gas pro-  
duction a farmer must consider his  
al management plan. By following  
e basic rules for proper crop pro-  
tection many of the problems will  
be automatically eliminated. The use  
the most suitable variety of corn  
the area reduces the risk of  
rvesting an immature crop or of  
iving the plants under stress from  
vironmental factors during the  
owing season. This is also a factor  
hen choosing disease and pest  
sistant varieties.

e proper use of soil tests and  
lanced fertilizers allows the crop  
grow without stress. It also  
duces the excess nitrogen that  
ght occur in the soil from over fer-  
zation. This will also save money  
the long run.

viously, proper weed control is  
sential to maximize crop produc-  
n. An off-shoot of this is that free  
rates will also be reduced since  
eeds add stress to the growing  
op. As Table I indicates, weeds  
so contain more nitrates than even  
rn so any reduction in weeds  
eans less total nitrates in the ensil-  
crop.

**TABLE I. Maximum Percentage of Dry  
Matter as Nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3$ )**

eds	7.5
rn, Sudan Grass, Sorghums	5.0
ts, Wheat, Barley, Rye	4.0
ome, Orchardgrass, Timothy	3.0
alfa, Red Clover	1.0

vesting methods can also affect  
level of nitrates in the final

silage. It has been found that after a  
period of rain the plant takes up  
more nitrogen than normal. This, in  
turn, causes a bit of lag time before  
the nitrates are metabolized to pro-  
teins. So by not rushing off to the  
fields too quickly after a rainfall,  
time is allowed for the plant to  
recover its normal nitrate level.

When frost kills the outer leaves of  
the corn plant, photosynthesis and  
protein production ceases but the  
unaffected root will continue to  
pump up nitrates into the stalk. In  
this case the crop should be cut as  
soon as possible to stop this storing.

In either of these cases the build up  
of nitrates is greatest in the lower  
stalks so by cutting higher above the  
ground the danger is reduced. This  
has the added effect of turning more  
organic matter back  
to the soil and not significantly  
reducing total yield. Finally, before  
harvest starts, the distributor in the  
silo should be adjusted properly and  
then checked to make sure it is not  
filling the silo off level. This will not  
reduce the nitrates, but it will  
eliminate the need to enter the silo  
to level the chopped material. Silo  
gas, being heavier than air, will flow  
to the lowest point in the silo. By  
having a level surface it allows any  
gas formed to flow toward the  
chute, down it and out through the  
properly ventilated silo room at the  
bottom.

**At present there is no safe test  
for silo gas.** The only signs are red-  
dish yellow fumes and a bleach-like  
odour. Therefore, once silo filling  
has started, it is safest to assume  
that silo gas is present and act ac-  
cordingly. Ordinarily the danger  
period only lasts until about three  
weeks after the last silage is blown  
in. If at all possible, no one should  
enter the silo until this danger  
period is passed. The doors to the  
silo room should be locked to keep  
children and visitors out and a warn-  
ing sign placed on the door. If it is  
necessary to enter the silo, a self-  
contained breathing apparatus, not  
just a gas mask, must be worn. In  
some cases, running the blower will  
help to eliminate the gas, but if the  
level of the silage is more than 20  
feet below the blower, this is not ef-  
fective.

In brief, contrary to popular belief,  
silo gas does not start forming soon  
after the chopped silage is blown up  
the pipe. It is the indirect result of a  
succession of activities and factors  
that may have been developing for  
years. It is a direct result of an ac-  
cumulation of excess nitrates in the  
ensiled crop. These excess nitrates,  
in turn, are the result of either poor  
management practices or un-  
favourable weather conditions.  
Under normal conditions nitrates  
that are taken up by plant roots are  
readily changed to proteins.  
However, any factor that interferes  
with photosynthesis, interferes with  
this transformation, and the nitrates  
are stores as free nitrates. These  
factors include: improper balance of  
fertilizers, or over fertilizing; poor  
weed and disease control; poor  
growing season, prolonged cool or  
drought conditions; and plant  
damage due to hail, frost, or other  
physical events. Observe and take  
note of what happens during the  
growing season; it may point toward  
upcoming dangers.

Obviously it will be necessary to  
enter the silo at some point. You  
should always let another person  
know when you go into a silo. When  
entering for the first time after  
harvesting, it is best to be attached  
by a life line to someone outside the  
danger area. The only way to avoid  
the risk of silo gas is to be prepared  
for it. Since it works so fast, it is im-  
possible to correct a wrong guess.

If a person is affected by silo gas,  
even the slightest irritation or  
coughing, he should be taken to a  
doctor **immediately**. Many farmers  
have died in their sleep due to the  
pneumonia caused by this gas.

In Ontario all silo manufacturers are  
required to distribute an operator's  
manual with new silos. There is a  
guide to safe silo practices included.  
If it is possible to obtain one of  
these books, it would be well worth  
the effort. There are two fact sheets  
produced by the Ontario Farm Safe-  
ty Association concerning silo and  
manure gases. Copies of these are  
available by sending a self-  
addressed, stamped envelope to:  
Mr. Jim Currie, Diploma Program,  
Box 335, Macdonald Campus,  
21,111 Lakeshore Road, Ste. Anne  
de Bellevue, Que. H9X 1C0.



# Safety with Farm Chemicals

by **Gerry Cornell**  
**Diploma II, Edited by**  
**Jim Currie, Assistant**  
**Director, Farm Practice**  
**Diploma Program**

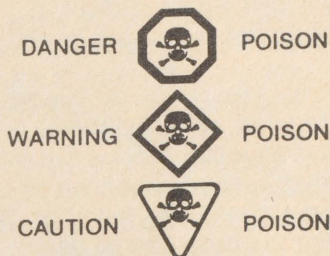
Modern agriculture requires the use of various chemicals. Herbicides are needed for large scale weed control, insecticides and pesticides for insect and pest control. Whether the chemicals are helpful or harmful depends greatly on the user's ability to handle them properly. When used as directed, chemicals are safe and effective. Used improperly, they can be injurious to man, animals, and plants. Due to the nature of these farm chemicals, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, and so on, many precautionary steps should be taken to avoid poisoning:

- keep chemicals out of the reach of children;
- avoid breathing of chemical sprays or dust;
- wear recommended protective clothing and equipment;
- avoid swallowing, splashing in eyes, or spilling chemicals on parts of the body or clothing;
- know the appropriate antidote to use if necessary.

The most important point of all is to read and to follow all directions on the chemical label prior to the application of the farm chemical. The label, by law, tells you the following:

- the chemical group and chemical name as well as the trade name;
- the concentration of the active ingredients in the product;
- the protective measures to be taken, including the correct type of respirator if required;
- the recommended uses and rates of application;
- the correct handling, mixing, and loading procedures;
- the first aid treatment;
- the storage of the chemical so that it does not endanger humans or livestock;
- the disposal of the chemical container so that it does not contaminate water or leave illegal

residues;  
—the toxicity and poisoning symbols are as follows:



People using farm chemicals, especially insecticides and pesticides since they are formulated to kill, should be provided with the necessary protective clothing and equipment which should be kept in good condition. Suitable and separate accommodation for keeping protective clothing and equipment should be made available. The risk is reduced through the availability of washing facilities including clean water, soap, and towels. Care should be taken to ensure that food and drink is free from contamination by farm chemicals. Of course, protective clothing and equipment should be washed and cleaned after exposure to farm chemicals.

People using farm chemicals should not eat, drink, or smoke unless they have removed their protective clothing, have washed their hands and face, rinsed out their mouth, and left the area in which they might be affected by farm chemicals.

Respirators and dust masks should be cleaned and ventilated at the close of each day's operations. The respirator cartridges should be replaced if any chemical smell is detected while in use and in all cases they should be replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications.

When transporting farm chemicals, consideration should be given to preventing spillage of the chemicals and transportation should take place only in suitable vehicles such as pick-up trucks. This insures protection to the driver and other users of the vehicle.

Seed treatment in the form of fungicide treatment and inoculation is common place to many large seed producers. Many legumes need inoculation with the proper symbiotic bacteria. Other seed, especially certain grasses, need to be treated with a fungicide to control disease.

Seed treatment can be quite dangerous and adequate protective measures including ventilation should be taken, even when the process takes place outdoors. The surplus treated seed should in no circumstances be fed to humans or to animals but should be destroyed in such a manner as to prevent human and animal contact with the residue or the smoke.

Farm chemicals may be corrosive, flammable, or toxic, and thus the chemicals should be handled and used only by persons who have been thoroughly instructed in their use. For example, insecticides which contain chlorinated hydrocarbons are more than likely highly toxic and affect the central nervous system, the kidneys, and the liver.

Pesticides, insecticides, or any farm chemical should not be entrusted to persons who, because of immaturity, mental illness, intoxication, or drug usage, might cause danger to themselves or other persons. For obvious reasons, pregnant women should not be employed to work with hazardous chemicals.

Unwanted chemicals and empty containers or bottles pose a problem for disposal. The best present solution is to have your own on farm chemical dumping and burial site. It should be at least 18 inches below the soil surface and six feet above the water table. Empty containers do contain residues and can be burned in such a way that persons cannot be endangered by the smoke. Plan your fire so that poisonous smoke can't drift towards livestock or buildings and bury the

(Continued on page 17)



# The Family Farm



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## THE HARVESTS WHAT ONE HAS SOWN

The primary objective of a grain producer is no different from that of a milk producer or a beef producer: it is to increase as much as possible the value of the inputs by seeking a maximum yield.

According to Daniel Chez, agronomist-plant pathologist of the Plant Production Service, the height of the grain heap at harvest depends on the number of plants per unit of surface, the number of seeds per head, and the weight of the grain. It is the product of these three components which determines the yield.

There are many constraints which prevent the producer from obtaining a maximum yield permissible for the species he cultivates. Among these constraints, some of them are difficult to control such as climate and the nature of the soil, whereas others which are related to crop management depend directly on the producer.

In the study of the different elements which have an effect on the growth of cereals will bring out the most favourable conditions for obtaining good yields. First, we will discuss climate, the soil, the previous crops, and the choice of seed, and later we will talk of the various steps in cultivation from soil preparation to harvest itself.

### Realities: Cool Climate Plants

Climate conditions have considerable influence on all plant production. Even if it is an element of management which can be influenced by the producer, it is, nevertheless, a fact that the climate in

this region will be the deciding factor as to whether or not there is a possibility of growing one species rather than another.

Cereals are plants which prefer cool climates; they grow well in most of the Quebec regions. Among the spring cereals, barley is the species which has the shortest growing season. It is followed by oats and wheat as indicated in the following table.

Table 1. Growth period of the main cereal cultivars

Oats		Barley		Wheat	
Cultivar	Growth (days)	Cultivar	Growth (days)	Cultivar	Growth (days)
Manic	97	Bruce	88	Laval 19	106
Laurent	95	Laurier	90	Opal	104
Oxford	98	Loyola	89	Concorde	105
Alma	95	Bonanza	89	Ankra	104
Scott	95	Conquest	88	Glenlea	101
Yamaska	94			Sinton	101
Dorval	97			Neepawa	99
Garry	96				

If the climate is a major constraint to the production of a cereal, one must not choose a species or a variety which is so late to such an extent that even if it has the best yield potential, it will not be able to reach maturity.

### A Drained and Fertile Soil

Generally, cereals do well on heavy soils such as clay loams or clays under the condition that these be well drained. No cereal can grow normally in a soil which drains poorly in the spring.

In a sandy loam it is preferable to plant barley rather than wheat or oats. That species grows better than the others with the storage of water which is more frequent in light soils; on the other hand, it is more sensitive to soil acidity. Oats grow well in acid soil but grow even better if

the pH is higher than 6.5; the same things are true for wheat. Consequently, the pH is one of the elements of the soil which one always tries to improve.

Soil analyses indicate its content in phosphorus and potassium. The soils that are richer in these two elements should be used for cereal production if one wishes to obtain maximum yields.

### The Previous Crop is Important

In a good production plan, one must always plant the crops in an order which is the most favourable. The best previous crops are certainly those in which a good weed control program has been practiced and which leave the soil rich in fertility and with a good structure. These ideal conditions are sometimes present after a crop of sugar beets, a well-maintained legume, or corn. Soil which has been cultivated in previous years is preferable to an old pasture. The main inconveniences of the latter are the weeds which will have grown even before the cereal starts to point out. Strong competition will result and choking of the cereal in the case of couch grass. Barley is the worst competitor for the weeds. Consequently, it must have a special previous crop. It is possible to reduce the ef-



fect of weeds by good use of herbicides in the spring and a couch grass program in the fall.

In addition to weeds, one must add poor germination and growth on land that was previously in pasture because of a soil structure which is not favourable to good germination and because of a poor utilization of the fertilization. A good part of the fertilizers will be used to decompose the soil organic matter; this will result in the liberation of nitrogen in the summer which is more favourable to lodging than to a good filling of the grain.

In summary, when a decision is taken to grow cereals in an old pasture, the producer cannot expect to obtain a maximum yield the first year, and it is probably with oats or wheat that he will obtain the most success.

### Certified and Adapted Seed

"One harvests what one has sown". This is an expression which really gets its true meaning here. Indeed, if the producer plants seed which germinates poorly, he will never obtain good results, even under the best conditions of cultivation. This does not mean either that buying certified seed will guarantee a good yield: in addition, the total management must be sufficiently good.

The buying of seed must be done in the fall for the following season if the cereal producer wishes to obtain the variety that is the most adaptable. Certain varieties are more demanding than others and the criteria based on yield potential must not be the only consideration. For the first year of production on an old pasture, it is preferable to use a hardier variety which will tolerate weeds better in difficult soil conditions even if theoretically this variety yields less than others which are suggested by the salesman.

### Soil Preparation Begins at the End of the Summer

After having selected a variety and the field where it will be sown, the producer will start working the soil at the end of the summer by destroying couch grass if need be. This destruction can be carried out mechanically. The rhizomes have to be exposed to the sun after having

been taken out of the soil with a tooth harrow, not a disc harrow — the latter does not pull out the rhizomes but cuts them up thus multiplying the couch grass hills even more. The destruction can also be carried out with the help of a herbicide containing glyphosate.

The next operation is fall ploughing. It is probably the most important cultivation operation; it improves the structure of the soil, its water reserves, and its microbial life; ploughing is the best way of controlling weeds. Of course, this operation will be even more efficient if drainage is good. If the soil is heavy or if there is an addition of lime, fall harrowing is recommended. Liming can also be carried out in the spring at the same time as the application of fertilizers; however, in order not to delay the planting, it is preferable to limit the number of spring operations.

Fertilization must compensate for the removal by the crop of elements which are expressed in kg per 100 kg of crop:

		N Nitrogen	P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> Phosphorus	K <sub>2</sub> Potash
Oats	grain	1.84	0.74	0.55
	straw	0.62	0.37	2.00
Barley	grain	1.82	0.78	0.52
	straw	0.75	0.25	1.50
Wheat	grain	2.08	1.07	0.67
	straw	0.67	0.16	1.17

A good part of the fertilizer which is added is retained by the soil and is not available to the plant. The addition of phosphorus and potash, therefore, must take into account the current soil fertility, whereas that of nitrogen will be related to what remains from the previous crop and the quality of soil organic matter that can be made available.

The quantity which is added must be in relation to the yield expected; however, in practice, it is felt that one must have at least 60 N/ha for oats and barley and 90 N/ha for wheat. These figures are indications only; good nitrogen fertilization must be determined in relation to the nitrogen balance in the soil in order to make sure the needs of the crop are covered.

### Adjust before Seeding

Seeding is a major operation in the success of cereal production and

the producer has complete control. As soon as the machinery can go on the land without risk of breaking its structure by compaction, it is time to seed. The date of seeding varies with the region, the drainage, and the type of soil, and it should not occur after mid May. Seedlings at the end of May and early June will never give good yields. It has been demonstrated many times that early seeding permits better yields and a better quality of grain, less lodging, less disease, and an earlier crop obtained under good conditions.

The rate of seeding is in relation to the objective in mind. Theoretically, the more seeds we plant the more will emerge and thus the bigger the crop. This reasoning, all too often applied, is not always exact because too much can be as harmful as too little.

One must aim at obtaining a certain number of seedlings at emergence. The objective will vary according to the conditions which are more or less favourable to tillering but should be about 300/m<sup>2</sup>.

### Calculation of number of seeds per m<sup>2</sup>

Assuming that the seed will germinate at 85 per cent (which represents the minimum norm of certified seed, one must always add 15 per cent more than the determined objective:

$$300 + (15\% \text{ of } 300) = 345 \text{ seeds/m}^2$$

### Calculation of weight per 1,000 seeds

If the producer does not know the weight per 1,000 seeds of the seed he has bought, he can calculate it. In order to do so, he counts 10 heaps of 100 seeds each and weighs them with a small kitchen scale which can read to one gram.

### Calculation of weight of seeds per m<sup>2</sup>

From the weight of seed, it is easy



determine the quantity to seed in ha. If 1,000 seeds weigh 32 ms, for example, how much will seeds weigh?

$$\frac{32 \text{ ms} \times 345}{1,000} = 11 \text{ g: the weight of seed to plant per } 1 \text{ m}^2.$$

### Calculation of weight of seed per hectare

$$11 \text{ g} \times 10,000 = 110,000 \text{ g} = 110 \text{ kg/ha}$$

Knowing that to obtain 300 seedlings/m<sup>2</sup> in his field, 110 kg/ha must be seeded, the producer will operate a seed drill to assure that quantity will be distributed. After adjusting the seed drill according to the instruction from the manufacturer, the producer will adjust, checking to see if the number of seeds distributed on a one metre distance correspond to the figure obtained in multiplying the quantity of seeds to plant by the spread between the rows of the seed drill:

number of seeds times the spread between the furrow openers of the seed drill equals the number of seeds to plant per metre.

Therefore, in our example there should be:

$$45 \text{ seeds} \times 0.18 \text{ m} = 62.10.$$

Therefore 62 seeds per metre if the seed drill produces rows spaced 0.18 m (18 cm) and

345 seeds  $\times$  0.15 m = 51.75. Therefore, 52 seeds per metre if the seed drill produces rows spaced 0.15 m (15 cm). These very simple calculations will probably be included in the next CPVQ guide in the following form: The seed drill being adjusted, one must also adjust for depth. Cereals

**Spread between the furrow openers in the seed drill (cm)**

### Use the Right Herbicide at the Right Time

At the moment, weeds should not create problems in cereals if one refers to the panoply of herbicides which are available on the market. Unfortunately the universal product

**Number of plants desired per m<sup>2</sup>**

	240	260	280	300	320	340
15	42	45	49	52	56	59
18	50	54	58	62	67	71

(a) The number of seeds to plant per linear metre is calculated for seed having 85 per cent germination.

should never be planted deeper than three centimetres. Otherwise the emergence is irregular, slowed down, and reduced. In addition, the seeds and seedlings are more sensitive to damping off diseases. The plants tiller less and have a tendency to lodge. The depth of seeding is adjusted by doing a few metres on the field and not on the road. In the field the soil must be loose on the surface; also the instruments have a tendency to sink a few additional centimetres which is an important consideration in the adjustment of the depth of seeding.

Finally, it is advisable to have the seed drill followed by a corrugated roller of the Brillon type. Rolling will improve germination and emergence while levelling off the land which will facilitate the harvest.

does not exist, and one must choose the herbicide in relation to the main species to destroy. The producer knows his fields well and knows what weeds are found from year to year. What one has to do, therefore, is to have them identified by an agricultural adviser and choose the herbicide which will permit him to get rid of them. The choice of a good product is not sufficient; one must also adhere to the dose and the stage of application recommended. Weeds damage cultivated cereals, and one cannot expect or hope to obtain a good yield if they are not destroyed at the right time. When the weed has reached the blooming stage, it has already done its damage. The producer must spray with the herbicide when the cereals have between three and five leaves.

(continued from page 14)

as recommended above. Under no circumstances should chemicals or empty containers be left lying about in fields and roads.

When mixing and diluting farm chemicals should wear protective clothing, boots, gloves, and goggles, a face shield, according to the recommendations on the chemical label. If the chemicals are highly toxic substances, impermeable clothing and an appropriate respirator are a must.

There are three channels of chemical absorption: oral, dermal, and respiratory. Oral poisoning is inevitable: blowing out plugged nozzles, smoking or eating without washing. Common examples. Dermal ab-

sorption of pesticides is the most common route of chemical poisoning and is often not detected until symptoms occur. The inhalation of sprays or dusts poses a serious threat. It can occur where mixing is being done in confined areas or, more commonly, when it is actually being applied.

Everyone who uses chemicals should know and be able to recognize the symptoms of poisoning. The most common signs are headaches, skin irritation, dizziness, weakness, thirst, nausea, trembling, loss of muscle control, excessive salivation, blurring of vision, and many of the actions of an intoxicated person. If any of these symptoms become evident, get medical assistance immediately. Anyone with any of these symptoms should not

drive himself to the hospital since mild symptoms of chemical poisoning may become more severe on route. Always take the container and label to the hospital. It can provide valuable information for the doctor. Take note of the Poison Control Centre in your area. For the Provincial Centre at the Centre Hospitalier de l'Université Laval, the telephone number is 418-656-8090. The telephone number for Ste. Justine's Hospital is 514-731-4931 and the Montreal Children's Hospital is 514-937-8511. Both these hospitals are in Montreal.

**Acknowledgement for material in this article is made to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment as well as to the Farm Safety Association, Inc., Guelph, Ontario.**



# This Month with the

# QWI

## Over 50 Years a Member

Mrs. Bernard (Gladys) Holmes, seen here cutting her anniversary cake, was the guest of honour at the February 5 meeting of Ayer's Cliff WI. The occasion was her 53 years as a Stanstead County WI member.

Mrs. Holmes, a registered nurse and native of Montreal, in June 1927 married Bernard Holmes and came to Ways Mills in the County to reside. Her mother-in-law, Mrs. Estelle Holmes, organizer of the County WI and its first President, invited Gladys to accompany her to Ayer's Cliff to attend a County meeting. Thus was Gladys initiated to Women's Institute and shortly after she joined the Way Mills branch. This was dissolved a few years ago because of lack of members, and Gladys joined the Ayer's Cliff branch.

During the years she has given much of herself and her talent to WI at the branch, county, and provincial levels. She served her branch in every office except that of Treasurer, was County President, and Convener of Welfare and Health for the County, and Co-convener at the Provincial level.

In 1941 Gladys was the recipient of a Life Membership and on February 5 the County President Mrs. Rheta Taylor presented her with a 50 year pin. In her remarks of appreciation, Gladys recalled attending meetings in Ayer's Cliff by travelling with horse and buggy. The same mode of transportation was used in Ways Mills if the meeting was held in a home that was beyond walking distance. Her many friends offer her congratulations and thank her for her many years in Institute.

## APPLES YEAR ROUND

The following excerpts are from Ap-



Mrs. Gladys Holmes.

ples Year Round, the Agriculture Canada publication 1655.

For all-round eating pleasure, Canadians choose apples. Apples make good eating. They combine with just about any food you can name. Served raw or cooked, hot or cold, they add their unique flavour to any meal. They are available in many forms — fresh, canned or dried, and as pie filler, solid pack, sauce or juice. Whether for their sweetness or tartness, apples can be used in many delicious recipes.

## Storing

Store baskets or bushels of ripe apples in a dark, well-ventilated, cool room (0°-4°C or 32°-40°F.) Store perforated plastic bags of apples in the crisper of the refrigerator to prevent decay, to slow down ripening and to help maintain quality, juiciness and crispness.

Freeze firm apple varieties that do not brown readily, such as Cortland, Northern Spy, Ida Red and Red Rome Beauty, for pies and puddings. Choose firm, mature apples; wash, peel, core and slice. To prevent discoloration, add 400 mg ascorbic acid in tablet form or 1 teaspoon in powdered or crystalline form dissolved in 2 tablespoons cold water to each 2 cups prepared apples. To sweeten, add 2 tablespoons sugar for each 2 cups prepared apples. Mix lightly to coat pieces.

It is not necessary to thaw frozen apples completely to be used in pies, baked puddings or cakes. For pies and puddings, thaw fruit only enough to separate pieces and then proceed as with fresh fruit.

Applesauce prepared in the usual way may be frozen. Thaw and use as fresh or canned.

To rehydrate dried or evaporated apples (if instructions are not included in the recipe), use twice as much boiling water as fruit. Cover and let stand 1 hour at room temperature. Follow recipe instructions for use.

Dried apples may also be rehydrated in a microwave oven. Add 4 cups water to 3 cups dried apples. Microwave 5 minutes on High, stir, then microwave 7 minutes more. Let stand 30 minutes, then follow recipe instructions given for fresh apples.

## Apple Metrics

- 1 large apple yields about 250 mL diced or sliced
- 250 mL dried apples weigh about 100 g
- 1 medium apple weighs about 150 g
- 6 large apples weigh about 1 kg
- 500 g apples yield about 1 L diced or sliced



1 can (540 mL)\* pie filler is sufficient for one 1 L (23 cm) pie  
\*Metric equivalents are now stated on cans.

### Pie Dumplings

stry for 2-crust, 9-inch pie  
medium apples, peeled and cor-  
ed  
tablespoons butter  
cup brown sugar  
teaspoon cinnamon  
teaspoon salt  
cup raisins

out pastry in a rectangle 1/8  
thick and cut in 6 squares. Set  
apple on each square and fill  
with mixture of butter, sugar,  
amon, salt, and raisins. Draw up  
four corners of pastry and seal  
es well. Bake at 425°F until  
try is lightly browned and apples  
tender (25 to 40 minutes,  
ending on variety and size of ap-  
s). If desired, serve with cream or  
wn sugar sauce. 6 dumplings.

### Baked Apples

medium apples  
mL butter  
mL brown sugar  
mL cinnamon  
mL water

e apples. Make a cut about 1 cm  
p around each apple near the  
to prevent skin splitting during  
ing; place apples in baking pan.  
am butter, sugar and cinnamon  
fill centres of apples. Add water  
an. Bake uncovered at 190°C  
l tender (25 to 50 min — McIn-  
n and similar firm varieties —  
e 25 to 30 min; Northern Spy  
other firmer varieties may take  
to 50 min). 6 servings.

### BAKE APPLES IN A

ROWAVE OVEN — Use in-  
dual glass custard cups. Add 15  
water to each custard cup.  
rowave on High until tender\*.

pple 3- 6 min  
pples 4-10 min  
pples 6-20 min

aking time depends on variety  
size of apples. St. Lawrence  
Lobo require the shortest time  
ake. McIntosh and Northern Spy  
uire slightly longer times, and  
artan, Red Rome Beauty and  
town require the longest time to  
e.

Variations — Try the following com-  
binations:

Add raisins, currants, candied  
ginger, cut peel or chopped nuts to  
sugar mixture.

Use mincemeat, cranberry sauce or  
jam in place of sugar mixture.

Top each apple with a marshmallow  
or a spoonful of meringue, 10 min  
before baking is completed.

### FAMILY LAW

*(The following are excerpts from the  
booklet "An Up-to-Date Family Law"  
published by the Quebec Ministry of  
Justice.)*

#### The Civil Code and the Family

A brief word on what the civil code  
really is would seem to be the best  
approach to what follows in this  
booklet. The Civil Code is a general  
law, comprehensive in that its provi-  
sions govern the normal day to day  
activities of our social life — the in-  
terrelationships that obtain between  
individuals.

So it is, then, that we find in its pro-  
visions articles dealing with the  
rights and obligations of spouses  
and children, matrimonial regimes,  
obligation to provide support, etc.

Since 1866, the lives of Québécois  
have been regulated by the Civil  
Code, which was initially based on  
the 1804 Civil Code of France. This  
code had become more and more  
outmoded — to the stage where it  
was no longer equal to the needs of  
contemporary reality, was no longer  
in step with the onward progress of  
Québec society.

A thorough reform of the code was  
required to make it conform to the  
aspirations of modern Québécois  
and, as a first step, family law was  
redesigned because in this, more  
than any other subject, the law's  
out-of-dateness was most keenly  
felt.

The two principles underlying this  
reform of family law are:

EQUALITY of man and woman be-  
tween them and before the law;  
FREEDOM of persons in the way  
they organize their family relations.

### Names of spouses

In marriage, each spouse retains his  
or her name and surname and exer-  
cises his or her civil rights under  
these names (for example, ex-  
ecuting a contract, obtaining a  
driver's permit, credit cards, etc.).

However, a woman married before  
the new law (before April 2, 1981)  
came into force has two possibilities  
open to her:

Either to keep the name of her  
spouse

In this case, the husband cannot ob-  
ject to the continued use of his  
name by his wife.

Example<sup>(1)</sup>:

Rita Murphy married John White in  
1970. If she so desires, she may  
continue to call herself Rita White  
and exercise her civil rights under  
that name. If she kept both names,  
she may continue to use them.

Or to use her maiden name

Example

France Smith married Peter Bentley  
in 1970. She may return to the use  
of her own name, France Smith. She  
need only advise the various ad-  
ministrative bodies concerned to  
effect the name change on certain  
documents: driver's permit, health  
insurance card, etc.

<sup>(1)</sup>All examples used in this booklet  
are fictitious and names and sur-  
names chose at random.

### The family residence

A Declaration of Family Residence  
involving an immovable property  
owned by one of the spouses can  
be made by one or the other or both  
of them by means of a form  
available at the registry office in the  
district where the immovable pro-  
perty is located. In this case, the  
presence of two witnesses is  
necessary, and the costs are  
minimal (approximately \$8). The  
declaration can also be made and  
registered by a notary or a lawyer.  
Besides registration costs, certain  
fees are payable.

### Separation as to property

The spouses may choose to be  
separate as to property by a con-



tract of marriage. It may also be applied for the court by one of them as a means of protection where the parties have been married subject to the partnership of acquests or community of property.

The separation as to property works in the same way as the partnership of acquests except that, under the former, either spouse can give away his or her private property without the other's consent.

Under the new code, absolute separation as to property no longer exists because of the new provisions relating to the family residence.

### Dear WI Members:

**Waterloo-Warden's** conveners were very active. Agriculture gave a recipe for dessert using cream. Citizenship told of a man who was going to reunite a young girl with her mother, whom she scarcely knew. Education reported on a project being carried out by young people of 17-21 on a voluntary basis. They receive a small fee from the Federal government. Welfare and Health read the account of a WI meeting in Alberta with a very similar agenda to ours. Economics conducted a contest. Names of spices were given in French which were to be translated to English. Three prizes were given.

During the meeting at **Abbotsford** little notes of local interest were written and enclosed in an envelope to be sent to a former member now residing in the Wales Home to help cheer her up on those cold wintery days. It was also reported that three members called on a sick member celebrating her 91st birthday. They took a decorated cake with them. The President read the résumé taken from the Winter 1977 issue of Federated News of the first Women's Institute being formed at Stoney Creek in Ontario by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless with the help of Erland Lee, a local prominent broad-minded and public-spirited young farmer. From this first meeting it was not long before it spread across the country and today we are known world-wide in over 70 countries through the Associated Country Women of the World, having several million members. This refreshed our

memories and gave more meaning of why we are members of this great organization.

**Granby Hill's** members agreed at their February meeting that, in spite of the troubles we have here in Quebec, we are still better off than anywhere else. Of course, we were all born around the area, enjoy visiting other areas, but think we prefer to continue living here. There are big cities nearby and we can travel into the U.S. very easily. We have the variety in the weather — not always agreeable — but we do have the conveniences to cope with it. Handicrafts were brought in by the members and two of them chosen to be sent to FWIC at Fredericton for the sales table. — The Sick and Shut-in Convener Mrs. McCutcheon took a nice potted plant to Mrs. Ossington, one of the members who has been unable to attend meetings for several years. Her interest in WI continues. The Agriculture Convener explained "Gone with the Wind" is what is happening to the top soil on the prairies and in other areas. Citizenship Convener read an article about the Founding of the W.I. and another report from "Do you know". — Education said that adults often swap skills. Reverend George Campbell III, an assistant minister, teaches some French cuisine. — Welfare and Health mentioned that "Ignorance is bliss", a short poem read. She spoke of the closing of departments in several hospitals. Compared this loss of necessary departments with the purchase of marble toilets and other renovations (outlandish) to Quebec parliament buildings. — Home Economic Convener reported that the flavour of onions in salads can be modified by chopping and boiling them for just a few minutes before using them. Left over celery can be chopped with an onion and cooked to make a freezer item for future use in stuffing or soups.

**Belvidere** members saw slides, shown by Mrs. Doris Conley, of a bus tour of India.

**Brompton Road** made cash donations to the Heart Fund and the ACWW Flag Tour Fund. In their program they held a decorated cupcake contest with prizes going to Mrs. Eunice Brown and Mrs. Myrtle Sage. The judges were Mrs. Margaret

Nadeau and Mrs. Annie Goodfellow. The cupcakes were auctioned off, the proceeds going to the ACWW Flag Tour Fund. — Mrs. Annie Goodfellow, Publicity Convener, donated two crocheted dollies, one for the Flag Tour Fund, the other for the sales table at Macdonald College in June.

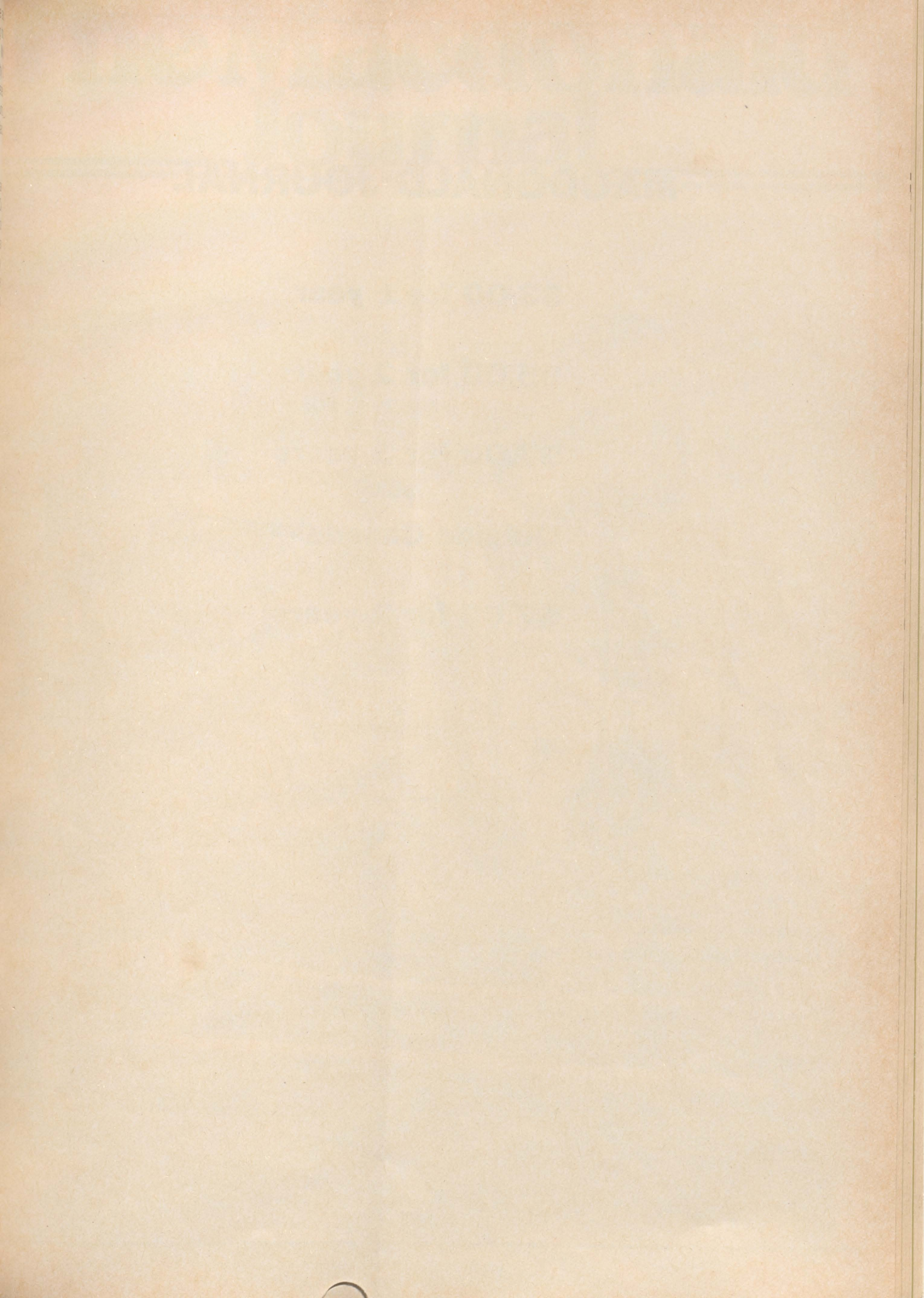
**Ascot** branch entertained all branches of Sherbrooke County at a dinner in honor of Founder's Day. This delicious luncheon was enjoyed by approximately seventy members and guests. The head table was centred by a beautiful anniversary cake made by Mrs. Harold Robertson. The cake was iced in white and decorated in the WI colours of blue and gold.

**Lennoxville's** motto: Teach the young people how to think, not what to think. Financial support was given to the Special Winter Olympics for the handicapped, which was held in Lennoxville, and to the Scholarship and Bursary Fund of the Alexander Galt Regional High School. — Members helped in setting up a window display of W.I. work in observance of the Institute Week and Founder's Day. In keeping with the 125th birthday of Mrs. Hoodless and the founding of the W.I. 85 years ago, slides of the Hoodless Homestead were shown to members and their guests, and to the Education and Publicity Conveners from other branches in the county.

**Wright** branch said in its motto: "There are no uninterested things. There are only uninterested people" and the members were asked in the Roll Call to bring one item of good news from a newspaper or magazine. Mrs. H. Payne gave a short talk on a project by the Ontario Ministry of Food and Agriculture called "Agricrews", where students are hired to do odd jobs on farms where needed, such as painting barns, building fences, making hay, gardening, etc. Cindy, a neighbour's daughter of Mrs. Payne who worked with this project said it was hard work yet she felt a healthy outdoor summer job with pay is worth it.

Ruth von Brentani,  
QWI Publicity Convener







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